



University of Connecticut

School of Engineering

Electrical & Computer
Engineering

Public Hearing – Monday, March 4, 2013
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE

Testimony Submitted by John A. Chandy
Presented by John A. Chandy

S.B. No. 840 - An Act Concerning Next Generation Connecticut

My name is John Chandy and I am an associate professor and associate head of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at the University of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding S.B. No. 840 - An Act Concerning Next Generation Connecticut.

The proposed \$1.5 billion investment in the University of Connecticut's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs is an investment in our state's future. Over the last decade, jobs in STEM grew three times faster than non-STEM jobs and that growth is projected to continue for the next decade. Moreover, 2/3 of the GDP growth is driven by STEM innovation. Before joining UConn, I spent many years working in high-tech companies in Silicon Valley and the Boston area – the two premier high-tech regions in the nation. I have seen how a culture of innovation built around STEM fosters the creativity and entrepreneurship that creates new companies and new jobs. This investment in the University of Connecticut's STEM programs will lay the groundwork to create that same environment here in Connecticut. With the new tech park arriving on campus, UConn is poised to be the driver of that innovation and job creation.

Connecticut's primary and secondary schools have long been the envy of the nation, and those schools are producing the best high school graduates in the country. Our goal should be to keep those talented students right here at home. The investments that the state has made in UConn has helped with that goal as our university has leapt into the nation's top 20 public universities. The proposed bill will keep that momentum going. By focusing on STEM, it demonstrates the state's commitment to the future growth of the state and will attract the best and brightest STEM talent to UConn.

I'll close by saying that Eli Whitney, Samuel Colt, and Igor Sikorsky called Connecticut home, and one could rightly say that Connecticut was the "Silicon Valley" of the 19th and early 20th centuries. This bill will restore Connecticut to its one time pre-eminence as the nation's hub of innovation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal.

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